

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

I stand in support of HB 6616: An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status. Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 26; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable, thriving and growing workforce that is ready to meet the needs of our future, Connecticut must ensure that these individuals have access to health coverage.

My name is Perla Vanessa Cardoso, I am a parent and resident from New Britain . I am also an organizer with CT Students for a Dream, a youth led organization that fights for the rights of undocumented youth and their families.

My family has been living in Connecticut for twenty-three years. After 30+ years of being in the U.S. my parents are have status here. But because they need to wait for another 5 years to be able to apply for healthcare insurance they still do not have health insurance. My mother worked at a plant nursery where she had an accident with her already injured knee. Shortly after that accident she was laid off. It's been about four years since that accident which has led to her having severe arthritis. We have gone back for check ups but all they've given her for her pain was a knee brace, ointment. Doctor's have told her she needs a knee transplant but once we told them she has no medical insurance they stopped helping us. My father has been working as a landscaper for over twenty five years. I've accompanied him to the ER for very gruesome injuries. Having HB 6616 passed would mean my mom would get a new knee and my dad wouldn't have to worry about choosing to pay his medical bill or utility bill.

I support **HB 6616** and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,

Perla Vanessa Cardoso